

Message Text

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ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 EA-12 ISO-00 STR-05 STRE-00 AGRE-00
CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00
PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00
INRE-00 /063 W

-----037711 300532Z /14

O 300500Z DEC 77

FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3978

UNCLAS TOKYO 20007

DEPARTMENT PASS STR AND AGRICULTURE ELECTRONICALLY

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD, MTN, JA, US

SUBJECT: GOJ TIMING ON RESPONSE TO U.S. AGRICULTURAL REQUESTS.

REF: TOKYO 19991

1. FOLLOWING IS A FURTHER VERSION OF PRESS COVERAGE OF GOJ
TIMING ON RESPONSE TO OUR AGRICULTURAL REQUESTS.

2. FULL TRANSLATION OF DEC 30, 1977 ARTICLE FROM VERNACULAR
MORNING NEWSPAPER YOMIURI:

BEGIN TEXT: GOVERNMENT TO CHECK INTO POSSIBILITY OF
TREBLING OR QUADRUPLING AGRICULTURAL IMPORTS FROM US;
PRIME MINISTER ORDERS SETTLEMENT OF ISSUE WITHIN JANUARY

ON THE AFTERNOON OF THE 29TH, PRIME MINISTER FUKUDA SUMMONED
AGRICULTURE-FORESTRY MINISTER NAKAGAWA AND MINISTER FOR EXTERNAL
ECONOMIC AFFAIRS USHIBA TO HIS OFFICIAL RESIDENCE, AND INSTRUCTED
THEM AGAIN TO SETTLE THE JAPAN-US TRADE CONSULTATIONS WITHIN JANU-
ARY NEXT YEAR. HE ALSO URGED THE TWO MINISTERS TO DRAW UP AS EARLY
AS POSSIBLE A CONCRETE PLAN FOR THE EXPANSION OF IMPORTS OF THREE
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ITEMS -- BEEF, ORANGES, AND FRUIT JUICE. IN ACCORDANCE WITH HIS
INSTRUCTION, THE GOVERNMENT WILL START EFFORTS FOR THE CO-ORDINATION
OF VIEWS AMONG INTERNAL CIRCLES CONCERNED, WITH AGRICULTURE-FORESTRY
MINISTER NAKAGAWA IN CHARGE. ACCORDING TO A GOVERNMENT SOURCE,
UNOFFICIAL NEGOTIATIONS HAVE ALREADY BEEN STARTED WITH THE US, AND
THE JAPANESE SIDE WANTS TO CLARIFY FORMALLY TO THE US SIDE THE
ACTUAL IMPORT QUANTITIES IT HAS DECIDED UPON, SHORTLY AFTER THE

TURN OF THE YEAR, SO THAT THE ISSUE WILL BE SOLVED IN A PACKAGE.

THE CONCRETE FIGURES CONCERNING THESE IMPORTS HAVE NOT YET BEEN REVEALED. THERE IS THE STRONG LIKELIHOOD, HOWEVER, THAT SUCH IMPORTS AS BEEF FOR HOTEL USE, ORANGES AND FRUIT JUICE, THE ANNUAL QUOTAS FOR WHICH AT PRESENT ARE FIXED AT 1,000 TONS, 15,000 TONS AND 1,000 TONS, RESPECTIVELY, WILL BE EXPANDED RATHER DRASTICALLY, OR THREE OR FOUR TIMES.

PRIME MINISTER FUKUDA IS STILL EAGER TO SETTLE THE ISSUE WITHIN JANUARY, BECAUSE IT IS EXPECTED THAT US PRESIDENTIAL SPECIAL TRADE REPRESENTATIVE STRAUSS' VISIT TO JAPAN WILL BE DELAYED DRASTICALLY DUE TO THE SCHEDULES OF THE US CONGRESS AND THE SPECIAL TRADE REPRESENTATIVE HIMSELF, UNLESS THE SPECIAL TRADE REPRESENTATIVE COMES TO JAPAN PRIOR TO THE REOPENING OF THE CONGRESSIONAL SESSION ON JANUARY 19. THE PRIME MINISTER THINKS THAT THERE IS THE STRONG LIKELIHOOD THAT IT WILL BECOME IMPOSSIBLE FOR JAPAN TO PREVENT PROTECTIONIST LEGISLATION BY THE US CONGRESS IN SUCH AN EVENT.

BECAUSE OF SUCH A SITUATION, THE GOVERNMENT WAS SCHEDULED TO MAKE A FORMAL DECISION ON ITS PLAN WITHIN THIS YEAR. PRODUCTION CIRCLES AND LDP DIETMEN CONCERNED, HOWEVER, RAISED UNEXPECTEDLY STRONG OBJECTIONS. ALSO THE LDP HASTILY SENT TO THE US FOUR DIETMEN, INCLUDING VICE-DIRECTOR TAKAMI ETO OF THE AGRICULTURE-FORESTRY DEPARTMENT OF THE PARTY. THE AGRICULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS, TOO, SENT TO THE US A DELEGATION LED BY CHAIRMAN SABURO FUJITA OF THE NATIONAL

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CENTRAL COUNCIL OF AGRICULTURAL CO-OPERATIVE UNIONS. THE GOVERNMENT HAS DECIDED TO POSTPONE ITS FORMAL DECISION ON IMPORT QUANTITIES UNTIL THE BEGINNING OF NEXT YEAR, THINKING THAT IT IS NOT WISE TO PRODUCE A CONCLUSION BEFORE THE COMPLETION OF RESEARCH BY THESE DELEGATIONS.

FOR THE PRESENT, SPECIAL TRADE REPRESENTATIVE STRAUSS IS SCHEDULED TO ARRIVE IN JAPAN ON JANUARY 11. END TEXT.
MANSFIELD

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TRADE AGREEMENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 30-Dec-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977TOKYO20007
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780002-0841
Format: TEL
From: TOKYO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t1977122/aaaaabej.tel
Line Count: 103
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 00770efd-c188-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EB
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 TOKYO 19991
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 02-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 134189
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GOJ TIMING ON RESPONSE TO U.S. AGRICULTURAL REQUESTS.
TAGS: ETRD, JA, US, MTN
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/00770efd-c188-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009